





G. S.
from
C. B.

VERSES OF THE WAYSIDE.

Egeria

Dusk, and Egeria, called him, and the King
Turned from the forum's strife his feet away,
To where, at peace, and girdled with a ring
Of everlasting hills, her valley lay.

There gleamed the cedarn forest, there its spring.
And happy he who found her Temple door,
And felt divinest arms around him cling,
And learned on lips of love immortal lore!
And happy they who reach by twilight skies
Some fount of light unseen of earthly eyes,
And, far from earthly sounds, some silent shore.
Sweet orb invisible, my soul's desire,
Shine on thy lover when the daylight dies,
And feed his secret heart with starry fire

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VERSES OF THE WAYSIDE.

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LOAN STACK

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VERSES OF THE WAYSIDE.

TO PSYCHE.

LAY by our sounding oars,
Land on these sunny shores,
This is Love's Garden.
Here summer aye is sweet :
Here comes nor snow nor sleet :
Winds nor rains blow nor beat,
Where Love is warden.

Immortal blossoms scent the heavenly air ;
Roses deep red ; and lilies debonnair ;
And every flower is Love's, and all are fair
Within Love's Garden.

Watered by living springs,
Fanned by his purple wings,
Fed with all fragrant things,
Here, in Love's Garden,
Boughs gather fresh perfume,
Young copses gleam and gloom,
Fruits soften into bloom,
Sweet buds unhardened :—
The pansies here for wan Ophelia's breast,—
Dark Dido's violet crown,—each flowery crest,

Worn long ago by Beauty long at rest,
Grows in Love's Garden.

“This happy, happy day,
Pluck me,” you cry, “one spray
From Love's bright garden ;
Some flower that never dies ;
A theft so sweet and wise
Ventured in Love's emprise
Love's self will pardon.”
Ah, Psyche mine, where mortal joys prevail,
Immortal blooms themselves will fade and fail,
Once pressed to lovers' lips all flowers grow pale
In Love's own Garden.

TO A FLOWER.

LIE thou upon the grave of one whose cheek
 And soul were fair and virginal as thou,
 In silence. Tears are vain, and words are weak,
 And she hears nothing now,

But the great chant and movement of the spheres,
 The unending harmon^{ies}~~k~~, supremely sweet,
 Whereof all music is an echo here,
 And Joy and Life a beat.

Of which great hymn her life, a little time,
 Was a far note and image. This she hears,

And is upgathered to the march and chime

Of the planets and the years,

And swells their tuneful tide with her new birth :

Nor knows, nor can she know for very bliss,

How her death hath made the heaven and all the earth

A wreck and wilderness,

To him who places here these buds of spring ;

Else were her joy undone,

To whom the pain of every living thing

Was grief to think upon.

Lie there. Exhale thy perfume—droop, and fade ;

Make the world poor by one more sweetness fled.

Die of a little sun or too much shade,

As lovelier things are dead.

Emblem of her who was the flower and fruit
Of innocence and beauty. Here she shone,
So white of heart, that Falsehood's self was mute :
An envious wind touched her, and she is gone,
Leaving this earth, where her brief lot was cast,
The memory of a fragrance and a strain ;
To us who loved—the ever present past,
Beauty, deep bliss, and an undying pain.

NORWAY.

Down the still fiords, bay after shining bay

We sailed, under the hills, beneath whose breast

Sleeps the great sea inviolate alway,

Mountain caressed.

On either side of us rose Solitude

Filling the sky with summits. Each vast height

Snow cap, cloud mantled, like a giant stood,

Silent and infinite.

Yet were not all things silent—there were cries

Of more than mortal anguish and distress,

The sad wind grieving down a precipice

Into a wilderness

Of ruined pines,—and stormy water rills

Flashing with foam, which, since the sun first shone,

Have thundered down unheeded, and shall still

Thunder unheeded on.

And moans of wildered birds, and the great beat

Of the wanning and the lapping of the sea

Like a cold lover wailing at the feet

Of one as cold as he.

Sometimes a dusky porpoise slowly wheeled

Sunwards in the mid channel ; from his lair

Sometimes an eagle, royally revealed,

Swam down the fields of air.

And underneath us, windless and serene,

The ocean forests lay,

Long fairy drifts of rainbow woodland scene,

Drowned in the purple bay ;

Fair realms of fern, more exquisite than ours,

More delicate and bright,

And endless glades of glimmering seaweed bowers,

In golden water light.

On such an afternoon to such a place

Came sad Undine, and from some mountain shelf

With desolate eyes and melancholy grace,

A shadow of herself,

Beheld in trance her youth return, the same
 As when, one summer morn, a sister band—
Knowledge, and Love, and Grief,—together came,
 And took her by the hand.

She felt white arms, that waved or seemed to wave,
 And, waving, call her downwards to the deep,
Where all her friendly waters, cold and grave,
 Lay mourning in their sleep,

And sighed, and rose, and turned her steps again
 Along the rock-hewn ledge, where, far aloof,
The sunset reddened on a lonely pane
 And a deserted roof.

UNDINE.

THEY.

WE have come from the bright

Dewy depths of the sea,

On this night of all nights

Thine attendants to be ;

Leaving our cluster

Of caverns serene,

Alone in their lustre

Of silver and green.

For the sea caves are lonely without thee,
They mourn for thy presence, Undine.

As our wont was, we gathered

 Last sunset at home : }

At midnight, in moonlight,

 We rose through the foam ;

Harnessed, each maiden,

 Her horses of spray ;

And forward, and shoreward

 We drave through the bay.

Speak sister, night flies, and our coursers

Are faint with the coming of day.

SHE.

I hear ye, belovèd,

 Earth tears us apart,

Yet think not our waters

Less dear to my heart.

But the sea must behold me

No more where it raves ;

Fates hold me, arms fold me,

Unborn of the waves.

Farewell to each foam-bell and billow,

Farewell to the bright water caves.

THEY.

Is it thus with thee, maiden ?

Alas ! Even so

We came, sorrow laden,

Laden we go.

Is the spell that has bound thee,
Worth wild loving brine ?
Are the arms that are round thee
So true and divine ?
Love that is passion at morning
Is pain at the even's decline.

HE.

Hush, timorous hearted ;
Strange sisterhood, cease ;
Although ye are parted,
Her path will be peace.
No sorrow shall come
To disturb her delight,

While the hands that upbear her
Are strong in their might ;
That her step shall be light,
That her eye shall be bright
I swear it, I swear it, I swear it to-night.

THEY.

We hear thee, Sir Mortal,
We go, we are blown
On the waves from thy portal :
In sad monotone
Singing, and drifting
Seawards, as snow
Which the winds are uplifting
And gulphing below.

Yet our care as a garment shall bind her,
Nevertheless, as we go.

Soon, this new fever
Of love overpast,
Passion will leave her
Awakened at last.

When Truth learns to falter,
When Faith's bloom has blown,
And the fire on the altar
Has saddened to stone :
In the grey eve of beauty and pleasure
She will come through the seas to her own.

SONG.

HER tresses are night, and her eyes sunlight,

And her voice rings full and clearly ;

Her step, where she treads, it is soft and light

As the breeze on the bending barley ;

She dropped a flower as I passed below ;

So I ride and I ride, and where'er I go

I break a lance for my lady.

She looked but once, and she looked me through,

As the sun through the oak leaves silting ;

With her hawk and her jennet, and feather of blue,
As she rode mid the dames to tilting.

I saw her flush as I dealt my blow.

So my bugle I wind, and I sing, What ho !

Who breaks a lance for his lady ?

With my spear in rest, and my grey heron's crest,
And my pennon merrily flying,

I ride to the lists at Love's behest,

The good knights loud defying.

The heralds they smile, for my banner they know,

And they cry to true lovers, What ho ! what ho !

Who breaks a lance for his lady ?

One look to my casque and my shirt of chain,

And one to my girths of leather :

I shake my rein on my horse's mane,

And we close with a clash together.

A splinter,—a shiver ;—What ho ! what ho !

They reel in their saddle and down they go ;

Who breaks a lance for his lady ?

Then I doff my helm, and I leap me down,

The green wreaths gather in showers ;

To my squire I fling each silver crown,

But I lay at her feet the flowers.

One glance I steal as I bend me low,

Then I vault to my saddle, and forth we go ;

Who breaks a lance for his lady ?

So I ride by forest, I ride by lea,

By the reedy river I wind me,

Singing—None other is fair as she,

The lady I leave behind me.

And if ever a good knight saith me no,

We turn, and we measure a full stone's throw,

And I break a lance for my lady.

IANTHE.

WE come from the banquet, Ianthe, thy lovers, awake !

We have left the wreathed wine cup, the lights, the rich
flowers for thy sake.

The banqueting halls are deserted, the spirits of the night
From their desolate niches look down in surprise and
affright

On the vintage half tasted, and glowing in goblets of gold,
The cool dripping lilies left lying all wet and unrolled,
And the wreck of white tables and couches thrown hastily
there

In our exit, so suddenly came we from revel and glare,
Out into the midnight, Ianthe, to tell thee ere morn,
thou art fair.

We have come from the banquet, Ianthe, thy lovers,
awake !

Out into the whispering night we have come for thy
sake.

Each silvery copse is a-fire, and o'er yon mountain bars
From peak to dark peak the blue heavens are inwoven
with stars.

The white-bosomed vapour ascends through the glens
from the dew ;

The lake is a pavement upheaving with gold and with
blue.

Through the tops of the forest the night wind is
blowing, so cool,

And so light that it stirs not the mosses and sedge in
the pool.

From the valley you hear the dull sound of the stream-
smitten weir,

Or the water-fall down through the wood—all is silent
elsewhere.

Wake, and hear us, Ianthe, and learn that, asleep or
awake, thou art fair !

We have come from the banquet, Ianthe, thy lovers,
awake !

We have left the rich music, the dances, the song for thy
sake.

The flute player, heated and piqued, with a flush and a
frown,

By the side of her flute on the daïs has flung herself
down.

She has taken the flowers from her hair, and is pouting
to see

One and all of her merry admirers have left her for thee.

Our slaves, like begarlanded ^{marble} ~~statues~~, wait heavily there,

And watch for our coming again, but we come not, we
swear,

Till this night we have waked thee, Ianthe, to say, thou
art fair.

We have come from the banquet, Ianthe, thy lovers,
awake !

We have stripped the rough firs of their branches this
night for thy sake.

Look out on the lawn from thy lattice, beloved, and see
The torches fling out their red vapour in honour of
thee.

Oh, their smoke! their hot glare, the bright glow, how
they crackle and shine,

As they mount through the night to thy casement and
rafters of pine.

In the midst, like a wild crew of rovers, cloaked figures
we stand

With our long shadows stretching behind us, black,
gloomy, and grand.

Wake, Ianthe, and listen! we go—from thy white
curtains there,

Thou wilt hear our song die down the forest as home
we repair,

Fare thee well till the morrow, Ianthe, farewell, thou
art fair.

They are gone! hist, Ianthe, 'tis I, 'tis thy lover,
awake!

I have tarried behind from the crowd unperceived for
thy sake.

Could I go without telling thee, love, what is well known
to thee,

That fair as they find thee, the rest, thou art fairer to me.
Here without in the night, from thy presence an exile
forlorn,

I leave a fond kiss on the threshold to greet thee at morn.

Sleep, prettiest and dearest Ianthe, sleep happily there,
Thy white arm thrown carelessly under thy long raven
hair,
And dream that thy lover is near thee, and says thou art
fair.

THE ELFIN HORN.

WHEN fresh from sea the nightly breeze
Blows o'er the shining bays,
And dips the giant forest trees
In moonlight and in haze.
When every dell, and every fell
Is veiled in silver white,—
Hullo, hola, tra la la la,—
Forth ride the fairies bright.

On such a night, to moon and mist
Her lattice flung amain,
Stood Bertha, while from wassail tryst
Arose the loud refrain :
Late hours they keep on Arthur's steep,
Deep drinking till the morn,
And hark, hola, tra la la la,
She heard the Elfin Horn.

And looking down she saw beneath
A shining cavalcade,
Bluebells for helmets, in every sheath
A trusty fern for blade.
Each bore afield a lettuce shield,
For spear a lily white,

So ho, hola, tra la la la,

Rode by each fairy knight.

The moonbeams glittered on their greaves

Of plates of dragon fly,

Bright body mail from shell of snail,

Of every hue and dye.

And there was seen the banner green

Of Fairyland upborne,

While hark, hola, tra la la la,

Outrang the fairy Horn.

Four Elfin pursuivants in row

Four yellow steeds bestrode,

A glow-worm at each saddle-bow

To light the leafy road.

And oh ! The Queen's resplendent car

It shone with diamond light,

As the soft fires of star on star

Injewelled in the night.

How fair the view ! Each thicket grew

Transfigured at their side,

For every land is Fairyland

Whereon the fairies ride.

The distant nightingales were still,

The cuckoo ceased to mourn,

So sweet and shrill by dale and hill

Was heard the Elfin Horn.

And while the lady stood to gaze,

She seemed at heart to long

To fly from moody castle ways

And sound of wassail song ;

Far far away from fret and jar,

Sad love, and rude delight,

And be for once what fairies are,

And ride with them by night.

To leave behind the fretted heart,

The sighs and stings of life,

Dull joy where sorrow has a part,

And rest so full of strife :

Leap lightly down from lattice bar,

And follow till the morn,—

Hullo, hola, tra la la la,—

Behind the Elfin Horn.

Away, away ! The deed was done.

She climbed through leaf and flower ;
To-morrow's cloudy morning sun
Will find an empty bower.
Her feet will leave nor dint nor scar
Upon the lawns to-night,
So fleet and blithe she speeds afar
To join the fairies bright.

What welcome hers, the secret this
Alone of Fairyland,—
No eye beheld the fairy kiss,
The touch of fairy hand.
But that she did not wander far
A listener might have sworn,

For hark, hola, tra la la la,

A peal of fairy Horn !

Where rode they—moon and dewes among,—

None saw and none may tell ;

What poet's tongue has ever sung

The haunts where spirits dwell ?

What painter limned a scene so fair

As we should see to-night,

If you, my love, a fairy were,

And I an Elfin knight ?

They sought her at the morning hour

On every winding stair,

In chapel shrine, in castle tower,

But found no truant there.

And fifty men have scoured the glen,

And by the Mass are sworn,

To ride apace upon her trace,

And bring her ere the morn.

But vain the horseman's hue and cry

From morn till eventide ;

For who can hunt when fairies fly,

Or find when fairies hide ?

Fleet roll the wheels of Elfin car,

And lithe they race and light,—

So ho, hola, tra la la la,—

Who ride with fairy sprite.

But after many a month of quest

They came, one summer noon,

Deep in the mighty forest breast

On print of fairy shoon.

And, close amid the tangles hid,

Beheld through copse and thorn,—

Hullo, hola, tra la la la,—

A dance to Elfin Horn.

And noted in the lissom crew

That circled on the green,

Sweet eyes of blue, which once they knew,

And hair of golden sheen.

Yet could not win her back to wife

With prayer, or promise plight,

For who would leave a fairy life

For love of mortal wight?

Yet spirits feel for human weal,
Repent at mortal pain,
The ill they wrought in gay unthought
They would not work again.
Forth sped beneath the evening star
A royal message borne,
To call each Elfin councillor
By sound of Elfin Horn.

And there was writ before the dusk
A law on lily scroll,
And sealed within the chestnut husk
That holds the fairy roll.
While heralds twain, with slackened rein
Proclaimed adown the night—

Hullo, hola, tra la la la,—

The will of fairies bright.

That when the Elfin troops abroad

Ride out by vale or stream,

No lady fair shall follow there,

Save only in her dream.

Lest ladies' thought should grow distraught,

And lords should look forlorn,

When hark, hola, tra la la la,

They hear an Elfin Horn.

But still when soft and fresh the breeze

Blows o'er the moonlit bays :

Beneath the lovely forest trees

March out the merry fays.

And every lady-love who leans

Her cheek on pillow white,—

Hullo, hola, tra la la la,—

May ride with them to-night.

SILVIA.

SILVIA, every joy attend her,
Frank and virginal and true,
Throned in merry maiden splendour
Sits receiving homage due.
Frowning shyly, smiling brightly,
Death and life she launches lightly ;
To her feet I draw me nigh,
Whispering, with averted eye,
“ Silvia, must I live or die ?”

Smile, and, at thine approbation,

Life, becoming honey sweet,

Seems a costlier libation,

Worth the pouring at thy feet.

And I raise my lance and banner,

And in ancient knightly manner,

For a gleam from that blue eye,

Battle onward till I die.

Frown, and, by thine anger smitten,

Love and life no more I cherish.

On my tomb it shall be written

For whose beauty I did perish :

“ One to whom it was not given

“ Here on earth to taste of heaven,

“Underneath this stone doth lie.

“Silvia frowned, and bade him die.”

So I murmur, deeply yearning,

But the peerless Queen of Earth

Smites me with her glance, and, turning,

Smiles in pride and frowns in mirth.

Touched with pity of mine anguish,

Yet content to see me languish,

With a laugh, and with a sigh,

She nor lets me live nor die.

NARCISSUS.

“ LOVE, of high heaven the fruit and flower and seed,
 Makes of this mortal earth an orb divine ;
Love gives to youth the secret song to read,
 Hid in the windy music of the pine.
Ah ! well is he who on Love's bosom knows
Faith unprofaned, and her reward, repose.”

So rang a distant voice, and, in the quest
 Of truth so perfect, beauty so serene,
At morning through the woods Narcissus pressed—
 A dreamer, feeding on a hope unseen—

Nor knew the airy voice before him flying
Was but an echo of his own sad sighing.

At length he came unto a crystal spring,
Set in green sedge, and shadowed with tall trees,
And, weary of himself and wandering,!

Sate on the margin, neither all in ease,
Nor all in pain, but sweet it seemed to stay
Beside so pure a wave, so far away.

To that abandoned haunt of rapt repose
Scarce comes the truant Faun in floral trim :
At most the soft-eyed deer its water knows,
A rare and timid drinker at the brim ;
Each candid lily on its bosom strewn
Blossoms and is beautiful for the Gods alone.

Here on the bank the primrose bathed and burned,

A golden Naiad, unpursued of man ;

Secure from eyes profane the wavelets turned

To kiss her virgin blossom as they ran ;

While the wild nightingale, from hour to hour,

Pealed the long wedding hymn of wave and flower.

And in the stream, lo ! tremulous with life,

A face to dream of—beautiful, yet worn—

Pale as the Gods in council—sorrow-rife,

And yet untouched by time, unswept by scorn ;

A countenance of grace and grave surprise,

With sad set lips and passion-haunted eyes.

And longing smote him, ere his day were flown,

To live and drain Love's cup, attain and hold

So fair an image, seeming half his own,
Yet not his own, but finer and more cold,
As white-robed penitents in vision see
All they might once have been, and fain would be.

And, as he looked, he sobbed with a great sigh ;

Till in compassion of his vast desire,
And, for he was so fair and like to die,
The Spirit of the Waters, half in ire
And half in mercy, waved an arm of flame
Full in the sunlight ; and Narcissus came,

And was not by the river, and, lo ! the breeze,
Returning home from faint tumultuous round
Of dalliance with the mosses and the trees,
To kiss his cheek and forehead, only found

Upon the marge one flower, and found no more
The pale Narcissus on this hither shore.

Whether this youth beneath the fountain breast
 Won truth indeed, no phantom of pale thought
Beset with mocking echoes, but clear rest,
 And the serene ideal that he sought—
Or whether, for his impotence of will,
And fancied sickness, he was bidden still
More shadows in that water-world to woo,
 We know not ; yet, if eve be quiet eve,
And not the threshold of some travel new,
 With other vainer visions to achieve,
By this, his feverish pilgrimage is past,
And of all old desires is rest at last.

So passed a dreamer from a world of dream,
Leaving but little after him except
A memory, and a blossom beside a stream,
Which a Muse found, and in her bosom kept,
And, roving the green hills and woods among,
Inwove into a coronal of song.

Perchance some Dryad wept him, for in sooth
He was full young and fair unwept to die ;
But the wise Gods are pitiless of Youth,
And look on Beauty with an equal eye,
Knowing the years are rich with flowers unborn,
And every tear of eve is dry at morn.

And of his name men made a tender theme,
And in that theme he lives, if life it be,

On one side of the irremeable stream

To move, a shadow, and, beyond, to see
The gleam of our old name in honour whirled
And blown at whiles about a younger world.

But lo ! ten thousand flowers by that sad brink

Budded, and brake, and blew,—pale multitudes
Bending of their own loveliness to drink,

And quivering, as to voices from the woods :
Emblems of him who, before fruit, did fade,
Wooed by an echo, lover of a shade.

BY THE SEA.

HE.

OUT seaward the ocean
Is starless and black.
Blown sea dew is drifting ;
The winds in commotion
Are whirled at its back.
But the billows uplifting
Their crests evermore,
Come rolling in music
And light to the shore.

And life was all moonless,
And wild the far sea,
Its billows but tuneless
Till flung upon thee.

SHE.

Above on the mountain
How deep is the night.
Each star evanescent
Is dim, as a fountain
Of water and light.
The moon is a crescent,
She looks far away
On the splendours unseen
Of invisible day:

Half orb'd for the meadow,
Half light on the sea ;
As I am a shadow
Illumin'd of thee.

HE.

High stands the cliff summit
In moonlight and breeze.
In thunder beneath it,
And deeper than plummet,
The desolate seas.
They rise to enwreath it,
They plunge to its caves.
Oh, the wash ! oh, the wail
Of the infinite waves !

And thou art a daughter
Of mountain and sea,
And I, a waste water,
Upheaving to thee.

SHE.

O'er misty sea ledges,
White glisten the flock
Of seagulls that gather
All night to the edges
Of island and rock ;
At morn they will feather
Their flight o'er the foam,
At sunset return
To their precipice home.

Thy heart is a mountain
Deep set by the sea,
And I, a winged spirit
That nestle to thee.

HE.

Along the wet beaches
The pebbles are bright ;
Seaweed and sea-glimmer
Bejewel the reaches
As gems of the night.
But darker and dimmer
The mouth of each cave,
And the depth of the caverns
Is black as the grave.

Thine eyes are the lustre
Of stones by the sea,
My heart, the cave cluster
Till lighted by thee.

SHE.

From watery hollows
Sea visions arise.
Fast flit o'er the billow
The night air that follows,
The foam-bell that flies.
The wave is the pillow
Where, tossed, it abides,
And resting for ever
Is one with the tides.

Winds drave us together ;
Thy love is the sea,
And I, a foam feather
That drift upon thee.

BOTH.

The waters outlive us,
Their voices remain.
The life that we cherish
What Genius will give us
To live it again ?
Cling close, ere we perish,
For soon we shall be
As the flake to the sea-wind,
The drift to the sea ;

As a shimmer beholden
By night on the breeze,
Ere morning the golden
Enkindles the seas.

SHADOW-LAND.

FAR, far aloof from Olympus and its thunder,
Lost midway in the spaces of the night,
Lies a dim wilderness of vanity and wonder,
Half within darkness and half amid the light.
Stray suns visit it : the callow moon has found it :
Sad seas circle it, a melancholy strand ;
Dreams impeople it, and shadows are around it,
And the Gods know it as the distant Shadow-Land.

Phantom music of Coronach and Pæan

Rolls wind-borne to the sky for evermore ;

Sun-mists open, and reveal to Empyrean

How shadows live on the visionary shore.

Life that were sleep, but for dreams that overcome her,

Smiles that are tears, and ambition that is pain,

Hopes unharvested, and springs without a summer,

Round the sad year, and renew themselves again.

All things there suffer death and alteration,

Fair flowers bloom for a season and are bright,

Songs over-sweet but outlive a generation,

Ring for a little and are gathered into night.

Cycles decay and their sepulchres ~~are traceless,~~ *have perished*

Kingdoms depart and their palaces are sand,

Names unchronicled, and ^{memories uncherished} ~~columns that are baseless,~~

Fill the lost annals of the distant Shadow-Land.

Here great souls, in a plenitude of vision,

Planned high deeds as immortal as the sun ;

Winds sang their requiem, and had them in derision—

Thoughts left in cloudland ; purposes undone.

Here sate Youth with the crown her lover brought her,

Fond words woven for her coronal to be ;

Brief lived, beautiful, she laid it by the water—

Time's waves carried it, and whelmed it in the sea.

What spirits these so forsaken and so jaded :

White plumes stained and apparel that is rent :

Wild eyes dim with ideals which have faded :

Weary feet wearily resting in ascent ?

Heroes and patriots, a company benighted,

Looking back drearily they see, along the plain,

Many a bright beacon which liberty had lighted

Dying out slowly in the wind and in the rain.

“ Ah ! sad realms, where the ripest of the meadows

Bring bitter seeds to maturity,” I cried ;

“ Ah, sweet life, who would change thee for the shadows !

Take me again to earth’s summers, O my guide !”

Smiling he answered me, “ Thy journey home is ended,

Raise up thine eyes, and behold on either hand ;”

Straightway lifting them, I saw and comprehended,

Earth was herself the Gods’ distant Shadow-Land.

Go, Song, and fall at Silvia's feet, and say,
Thou art not Love,—but from a frozen sky
That knows not of Love's name nor of Love's way,
Hast fluttered idly to her door to die.
Shake from thy plumes, before thou meet her eye,
All passion—veil thy gaze, forget thy pain,
And, if she take thee on her heart to lie,
Become a thing of beauty, a soft strain
Filling her dreams with music. Should she deign
To ask what bird in what enchanted grove

Taught thee a note so tender, swear again,
By all thou holdest dear, it was not Love ;
Else will she drive thee, Song, into the night,
And lost my toil will be, and thy delight.

SHINE on, sweet star, unnamed : nor ever know
The kingdoms that thy beauty holds in fee,
Travel round other suns : thy beams bestow
On other worlds thy satellites that be.
I am borne, I am driven, I drift away from thee,
Down the black waves remote from planet light,
Unpiloted, unbeaconed. The great sea
Hath me, within the hollows of the night.
Perchance in years afar, with finger white,
On some fair holiday when hours prove long,

Turning this page my love in sweet affright
Will marvel at herself embalmed in song ;
Nor find it in her gracious soul to blame
The sad drowned verse that never spoke her name.

CORINNE.

'Twas but in June—and this is still September,
And yet, Corinne, and yet,
What lips of mine for ever must remember
Your eyes forget.

One ghostly happy night, where Dreamland closes,
Love's face methought we knew,
As with winged feet of light among the roses,
He lit, and flew ;

Saw his fair fleeting smile, the shining glamour
Shaken from each false plume ;
And heard with beating pulse the mystic clamour
That stirred the garden bloom :

A tumult and a triumph Hymenæan,—
Moon-smitten leaf and spray,
Trembling and heaving to his golden Pæan
Till forth he winged his way.

A dream ! a dream ! a dream !—not hence nor hither
Came Love, nor ever flew ;
'Tis but to look in your cold eyes to gather,
That memory is untrue.

And yet—this throbbing heart, a glowing ember,

These veins that riot yet,

Seem still, Corinne, to swear that they remember

' What eyes of yours forget.'

LUCIAN TO CYNTHIA.

DEAR face, so sweet, and sweeter for the years
That wavelike break and break—what hymn of praise
Shall be thine own upon this day of days ?
What flower made bright by morning's dewy tears
Crown thy beloved hair ? All words are old,
All flowers outworn with time. I seek in vain
An undiscovered bloom ; some virgin strain
Of worship unimagined, love untold.

So take this rose, love's flower, nor deem less fond
My one monotonous song, that I have found
Repose and guidance for my soul in thee,
When all behind was night, and all beyond—
A windy waste of waters, and, around,
The lights and foam and thunder of the sea.

REGRET.

BEAUTIFUL May, since you and I

Met, full many a year is fled ;

Many a Spring has blossomed by,

Many a passion-flower is dead ;

Golden hairs are silver gray ;

Even you are older—beautiful May.

When last in English lanes we met

Beneath the temple of the noon,

The wild white hedge with hawthorn set
Gave promise of a glorious June.
I keep one blossom still to-day ;
Do you remember, beautiful May ?

That year, the royal summer shone
In bloom of flower and greenery :
But what was left, when June was gone
And Autumn come, to you and me,
Wherewith to face the worldly strife,
The long anxieties of life ?

Arcadia : Dreamland : memories sweet :
Tender ideals all unstained :

No idol trampled under feet :

No friendship lost : no faith profaned :

But leaves, though faded, precious still,

And cherished with a constant will.

Not to have tasted, is the best.

The wine of bliss, so rich, so clear,

To which our mortal lips are pressed,

Once drunk on earth makes heaven less dear.

Give me the fever of the soul ;

Sweeter its thirst than any bowl.

'Tis fancy's magic cup alone

Avails to feed and fire the heart.

The graven Gods on yonder stone
Grouped by the carver's cunning art,
If into sudden life they leapt,
Would live less gladly than they slept.

"Ah, bring us back"—they soon would sigh—
"The marble rest from which we sprang,
The long enchantment of the eye,
Set lips, whereon no laughter rang,
Delights eternally delayed,
And promised kisses, never paid."

Dear May, if youth in dreams has gone,
If life untasted lifeless seems,

'Tis better to be dreaming on,

Than to have dreamed and waked from dreams.

Only the future and the past

Are joys that do for ever last.

WHAT THE KNIGHT SAID.

DEAR love, I go, I go ;

Knights may not dally,

When the loud bugles blow

War through the valley.

One whisper sweet and low,

Ere we be parted ;

One loving kiss, to show

Thou art true hearted.

This morn we meet the foe ;

Thou, that hast loved me so,

Look from thy bower ;

Wave once thy hand of snow,

And, as I pass below,

Fling me one flower.

I, while I wend me fro,

Turning to find thee,

Shall see a face I know

Glowing behind me ;

And thy good knight shall grow

Strong where they need him,

Knowing thy soul doth go

With him to speed him.

WHAT THE LADY SAID.

RIDE forth, my soldier true.

Yes, 'twas the bugle blew

Far down below thee.

Since first thy spirit drew

Mine, like the sun the dew,

Sweet heart, I know thee.

Love, kiss me through and through ;

Take thy brave bonnet ;

This leaf I bind thereto,
Round it, and on it.
Till thou art lost to view,
We, from our casement,
Watching thy banner blue
Round the hill basement,
Bid thee a long adieu.
Ride on to dare and do ;
This thought shall cheer thee ;
That I, thy lady true,
Ride in heart near thee.

GAMALIEL.

By the golden ladder rail
Climbing to Jehovah's veil,
Stands, a naked sword revealing,
Michael, clad in beamy mail.

Israel's tribes, devoutly kneeling,
Knee on knee, and stair by stair,
Through the terraces of air
To the throne of God repair.

Whoso, midway to the Lord,
Stumbles, hasting heavenward,
Headlong, as a thunder smitten,
Falls upon the angel sword.

From Samaria, it is written,
Came Gamaliel by, and saw
Reverent Israel upwards draw
Towards the knowledge of the law.

Said the Rabbi—"Must they fare
Thus, who climb the golden stair ;
Straightway, if they fail, descending
To Gehenna and despair?"

Quoth the angel—"Even so,
Such a fall has such an ending ;

Through the peril all must go
Whoso seek the Lord to know."

Said Gamaliel—"Knowledge such
Be for priest and seer to touch ;
Mine to wait without his portal,
Knowing nothing, loving much."

So he spake ;—and in a trance
Heaven lay open to his glance,
And he saw the hosts immortal
Who behold God's countenance,
And partake the living manna ;
Saw afar, in bended row,
Israel kneeling, long and low,
Mid the Cherubim, who know.

Higher still, and far above,
Burning as a burnished dove,
Singing loud and sweet Hosanna,
Stood the Seraphim, who love.

ON GLORIANA'S CANARY.

FLY gently, feathered travellers, by,
He who in silence here doth lie,
Was a canary, fair to see,
So blithe, and bright, and fancy free,
So velvet plumed, so silver throated,
And to his lady so devoted,

He seemed some elf, by Elfin queen
Banished from fairy court and green,
And, for a season, at her word
Made to do penance as a bird.
All day, his little shining eye
Turned to his mistress seated nigh ;
From morn till night his little throat
Rang out a merry mellow note ;
And something loyal in his tone
Told her, he sang to her alone.
So, in requital of his zeal,
She gave him, under hand and seal,
This gracious promise, that so long
As she should please to like his song,

No hand but hers should ever feed

His tiny trough with daily seed.

A happy life, how soon it flies !

Ye feathered travellers, here he lies.

BITO AND CLEOBIS.

“LET us depart, for half the day is flown.

The sweet cicala from beneath her stone

Watches the golden afternoon decline ;

Long since the knife is bared, the victim waits ;

Bring out the snow-white oxen to the gates,

And lead your priestess to her lady's shrine.”

So spake the ministress—and still the day

Descends, and still the snowy kine delay

By meadow, or in forest, or on feld ;
And the seer's heart grows heavy for the city,
For well she weens the great Gods have no pity :
Smiting the land for sacrifice withheld. ;

Loaded this year our vines with double bloom ;
Filled to the brim each garner bursts for room ;
Shall she who sent the wealth be poor alone ?
Not while two children of her priestess live
To taste the gifts, and thank the Gods who give
Life unto all and summer to their own.

And ere the shadows lengthened,—ere sunshine
Reddened the under leafage of the vine,
They stood beside the chariot of the queen.
'Twas but on yester morn mid full acclaim

Five times they rested, victors in the game,

And bound about their brows the conqueror's green.

Now by the chariot pole, on either hand,

With burnt bare necks they bind the oxen band

Round shoulder and round loin. No charioteer

More stoutly yokes his team than these their breast

Beneath the load. O Priestess, be at rest.

Thy car is harnessed, for thy sons are here.

Thrice with big hearts they bore upon the thong ;

Three times the axle creaked, and the wheel hung,

And rested :—and they sighed, and stood away ;

The fourth, with one loud shout, and souls resolved

They drew amain, and the great wheel revolved

And rolled the car of Heré on its way.

Still the sun burned, and not a windy breath

Stirred the grey olives : the seas underneath

Shone as a mirror of misty fire and blue :

Heavy the wain, the journey rude and long ;

But those who serve the Gods are ever strong,

And youths are heroes when their hearts are true.

~~But~~ the Priestess saw nor olives, nor hot sands,

Nor the sun-smitten seas. With trembling hands

Tending her frankincense, she only knows

Two young heroic faces white with pain,

Loud wheels, that clang through beating blood and brain,

Till—as her spirit reels—behold, the close !

Upon the roadway stood the crowds to wait.

The deed was done ! She passed the temple gate,

Felt as a flame the shouts, the cymbal tones,
Clasped hands, and jubilant faces lit with pride ;
And heard dim thundrous voices at her side
Calling her happy mother in such sons.

And at the evening, when the feast was stayed
And the fires licked the stone, the Priestess prayed
With hands uplifted to the Gods on high :
First for the city of the horse and spear,
Unloved of men, but to immortals dear,
Then for her sons, twin apples of her eye.

“ Give them, ye Gods, for this their love and truth,
Life, and life's bloom, the flower of happy youth,

Beauty and speed, heroic length of days,
Strength in the battle, fortune in the chase,
Fond children growing to their father's grace,
And at the far fair end—immortal praise.”

She ended ; and a favourable flame
Ran round the altar rim,—and answer came,
Soft as a silver trumpet, from below.
“ Peace unto thee, and peace to these thy sons ;
This night the Gods will give their chosen ones
The last and richest blessing they bestow.”

And lo ! the Argive host upon the plain
Slumbered, and in one tent the brethren twain

Slept the deep sleep of valour after strife.

Silence and peace were in the camp that night,

And when again uprose the morning light

Bito and Cleobis had passed from life.

MALVERN.

STANDING on the mountains in the mighty morning
bloom,

We watched the mists unrolling in wreaths of water
fume.

The sky was one blue temple, the hills one golden glow,
And through the clouds that melted, broke the endless
plain below ;

But here and there in shadow still upon tuft and
thorn

Shook in their silver splendour all the dewdrops of the
morn.

Over the fields beneath us came the kingly stir of day,
Voices of English children from the village at their
play,

A shepherd call—the cattle-low—some ploughman to
his team,

And the loud din from Worcester of the hammer and
of steam.

And we turned, and far above us, so far and yet so nigh,
Nought but his song between us and the wilderness
of sky,

Hung the lark—a floating music—with his throbbing
wings unfurled.

Lord of the vales and mountains, oh ! how lovely is thy
world !

THE SONG OF THE LAUREL.

UNDER Olympus divinity haunted
Lies a rich valley, Apollo, of thine ;
Lowland and upland, with grey olive planted,
Lovely in spring, but in summer divine.
Deep in its heart, where the gorges are narrow,
Moist with the foam-dew afloat from the glen,
Silver Peneius, a white water arrow,
Enters in thunder, and issues again.

Hither at morn, when the mountain in shadow

Rested, untroubled as yet of the noon,

Came truant Naiads afoot through the meadow

Twining wet grasses to petals of June.

Pleasure and youth, ankle-deep in the lotus,

Chasing the bee, and outsinging the bird ;

Never of late, since Impiety smote us,

Voices as sweet by our rivers are heard.

Couched in mid cover, the singer Apollo,

God of the forest and king of the bow,

Watching his deer as they drank in the hollow,

Marked the divine apparition below.

Glowing immortal had seldom beholden

Bosom more snowy or sunnier hair,

And in the prime of the age that was golden

Gods were but frail when a Naiad was fair.

Swiftly he loosened his belt and his quiver,

Laid down his bow and his arrows of light,

Stole like a thief through the flags of the river,

Silent and swift as the wings of the night.

Saw in her beauty the daughter of Ladon

Zoneless and free, unaware of the God ;

All the ripe meadow for love of the maiden

Breaking in blossom and light as she trod.

Was it dim sense of his presence appalled her,

Or an elm leaf in the deep thicket stirred ?

Was it the heron that uprose by the alder,

Conscious of peril, her sentinel bird ?

Sudden she paused in mid carol arrested,
 Stood like a marble in frozen affright ;
Soon, as a fawn by the leopard molested
 Fled for Peneius, nor stayed in the flight.

Fierce are the loves of Immortals, a fuel
 Burning as pinewood, and stormily spent :
Tears in the weak stir the thirst of the cruel,
 Never yet made one pursuer relent.
Then, in despair, seeing none to deliver,—
 All her bright girlhood, to sorrow so nigh,—
Flying, she sobbed a wild prayer to the river,
 Still to live on as his maiden or die.

Down underneath in their green water palace,
 Hard by the ocean's unquenchable springs,

Crushing sea grapes till they foam in the chalice,

Sit, coral girdled, the grave river kings.

Faint sealight glimmer about them :—a lustre

Born of pale diamond and stones of the brine ;

Agates above them in pendulous cluster

Lit by the spirit of clear hyaline.

Blinded with mist of the watery ages,

Eldest in race of all Tritons that be,

There, in the middle, the eyeless sea sages

Harped of the wonders and works of the sea.

What mellow song from sweet Sicily flattered

Orpheus the bold and his mariner crew ;

And how the trident of seagod had shattered

Continents vast into Cyclads of blue.

How the great deep, after tempest abated,
 Washed a white waif to the caverns of green,
Whence driven thither no tongue hath related,
 Or from high Heaven, or from inner ravine.
Long in the depths of her shimmering prison
 Daughter and darling of ocean she lay :
Then with soft laughter to earth had arisen,
 Venus, a cloudlet of sun and of spray.

Down underneath, in the pause of the story,
 Came the loud wail of the fugitive girl ;
Till from his dwelling Peneius the hoary
 Lifted his head o'er the roofing of pearl :
Marked the hot chase of the God to o'ertake her,
 And, in deep pity of her the forlorn,

Sware a great oath by the mighty Earth-shaker,

Ocean should keep what of ocean was born.

So sware the God, and the oath was recorded—

Straightway the earth rose in wavelets around,

Took and transfigured the maiden, and corded

Both her slight feet in a stem to the ground.

Branches began where the shoulders had rounded,

Leafy knots budded from bosom and brow,

And in his triumph the victor confounded

Clasped at a woman and kissed but a bough.

Where in the meadow was Daphne, the maiden,

Daphne, the laurel, arose to the sun ;

Steadfastly rooted and foliage laden,

Praising the Gods for deliverance won.

Then, as half woman, in gentle compassion
Of the wild lover who wrought her alarm,
Swayed by the breeze, and in pain at his passion,
Circled his brow with her evergreen arm.

This is the song of the God and the Laurel,
And the bright water nymph, turned to a tree.

This is the song,—but wherein is the moral?

Listen, Aglaïa, fairer than she.

As was the doom of the singer Apollo,

So hath the lot of his ministers been,

Beauty and Love through the valleys to follow,

Winning no meed but a chaplet of green.

TO-MORROW.

THE sun is fierce ; our camel troop
Under his fiery arrows droop.
Courage, companions ; yonder gleam
The springs we drank of in our dream.
Another noon of sand : the cool
Oasis with its palmy pool

To-morrow.

Thus with bruised hope and broken plan
Travels our cheated caravan ;
Soft river airs the vision fanned.
We wake to illimitable sand ;
Still,—one may reach the promised land
To-morrow.

“All ^{last wished for} ~~that~~ thou ~~couldst~~ may be thine.
Assume the crown of Charlemagne !
Lead only where the path is barred
One more old charge of thine Old Guard.”
Hope sang. His eagles heard the strain—
There will be battle on the plain
To-morrow.

But ere its eve is dewy wet
A star of Empire shall have set.
There will remain, of all his might,
A shattered multitude in flight,
Trampling and reeling from the fight,
To-morrow.

And then, a crownless exile pent
Afar in ocean banishment,
Watching in vain the boundless sea
For some white sail to set him free
To-morrow.

So vainly pine the great and brave.
What asks the sailor on the wave ?

A night of summer weather more ;
Then—one dear face upon the shore.
The winds are fair, the nights are short,
And the good vessel is in port—
To-morrow.

Before the morn his couch will be
A coral grave beneath the sea ;
And the false waters, cold and green,
Will smile, as though no wreck had been,
To-morrow.

With nights and days of burning toil,
Lit by illusion's precious oil,
And fed by fires that in him glow,
The painter sees his picture grow.

But one more touch from these poor hands,
And lo ! by Raphael's side he stands

To-morrow.

Through the sad hours when others slept
Angels with him have watched and wept ;
A wealth of tears, prayers, rich despair
Lie mingled on the canvas there.
Fancies which Raphael never knew
Were his in spirit while he drew :
Who twice will scan his picture through

To-morrow ?

So roll the years. So slowly dies
The light of youth from sober eyes ;

In vain we climb the mountain capes,
The lovely rainbow still escapes.
About the pathway to thy throne
Dead hearts, like autumn leaves, are blown

To-morrow !

I, wiser than the crowd who fail,
Ask of the Genius of the Veil
But this—that yonder budding thorn
May break into a rose at morn,
Miranda's birthday to adorn,

To-morrow.

DEW on the heather, bloom on the roseleaf, light in the
 skies,

Thunder of mountain and forest when tempests arise,
 And the flash and the flow of the fountain that leaps to
 the sun,

Are thy life-cup, O Life ! that thou givest to taste unto
 none.

Shall we never, O God, till our pulses for ever are dumb,
 Feed our hearts of desire on this Beauty that flies as we
 come ;

Nor know the great rapture of Nature ; nor once overhear
The secret woods whisper together ere mortals appear ;
Drink the dew with the thirst of the bee, drain the bloom
 of the flower,
As the nightingale drains it alone in his moon-smitten
 bower ;
Nor joy with the fountain, nor grieve with the winds as
 they grieve ;
Nor follow the red dying sun as the plover at eve,
Who gathers the shadows around him, and flits o'er the
 wold
And the watery wilderness burning with fire and with
 gold ?

TO HERMIONE.

HERMIONE, you ask me if I love ;
And I do love you. But indeed we drift
Fast by the flying, fleeting banks of life,
Towards the inevitable seas. It seems
But yesterday I saw, as in a dream,
Childhood—a flame of glory—come and go.
And, lo ! to-day these hairs are flecked with time
Already : and all the silver minutes glide
More dreamily than ever for the love

I bear you ; hand in hand, and hour by hour,
Floating beside you to the sounding falls,
Whence we must leap together into night.
Are we not happy ? Is not life serene ?
We do but pass—you say—from one bright shore
Upon a brighter ! Dear Hermione,
Be glad there is no shadow on your eyes ;
But this I know, that all the world beside
Seems faint with pain ; the rose upon your breast
Is not more full of perfume than the world
Of pain. I hear it even at your side
By day and night—the illimitable sigh
Breathed upwards to the throne of the deaf skies—
A cry of hollow-cheeked and hungry men
Burning away life's fire for little ends ;

And women with wan hearts and starving eyes
Waiting for those they love to come again
From strange embraces—ruined womanhood
And barren manhood, fruitful but of pain.
Such is the shore we float from ; for the shore,
The brighter shore, we reach, I only know
That it is night, Hermione, mere night,
Unbroken, unilluminated, unexplored.
Come closer, lay your hand in mine ; your love
Is the one sure possession that will last.
Let us be brave ; and when the Shadow comes
To beckon us to the leap, rise lightly up,
And follow with firm eyes and resolute soul
Whither he leads—one heart, one hand, to live
Together, or if Death be Death, to die.

THE PALACE OF CIRCE.

WITHOUT—a belt of pines : and the deep night
Perfumed with flowers and lulled with nightingales ;
And starlight ; and the distant hollow vales ;
And o'er the distant vales a mountain wall
Down whose dark ledges the white waters fall,
Making the forest echoes musical.

Within—what magic blaze of happy light
Streams through the open casements on the night,

Kindling with breath of fire the valley glooms ?
What festal mirth is here ; what gay delight ?
Thrones soft as sleep, and founts of silver flight,
Wet lilies, and wreathed goblets, and young blooms
Of faces fairer than the flowers are bright.
Who stands with golden sceptre there,
Ruby and emerald flashing bare
On robe of snow and raven hair ?

This is the daughter of the Sun
Revelling on when day is done.
Till the burning noon abates
Motionless her palace gates,
Her halls more silent than the noiseless dawn ;
No sounding footfall comes or goes,

Invader of her deep repose,
Across the silent palace lawn.
The lily, and the daffodil, and the rose,
After long draught of daylight's glows,
Lie flushed and fevered on earth's breast,
Hushed by the golden hours to rest,
A company of sleep oppressed.
And every fountain in a sunny swoon
Leaps into light, and dies into a tune
Of most deserted music, all the afternoon.
The shadows lengthen : the low breezes linger :
Till the dial's sunless finger
Touches sunset ; and behold,
Wheeled on wheels of flame and gold,

Her mighty sire's imperial car
Rolls beneath the mountain bar.
And lo ! a thousand torches burn the night,
And all the hills are garlanded with light,
And far above the valleys, on the height
Near the keen stars and the eternal snow
The shepherd of the mountain wold,
Folding from the wolf his fold,
Seeing great cheer, and hearing trumpets blow,
Knows the daughter of the Sun
Hath her merry rites begun.

From brake and grassy river ground,
Where through the noon they rest unfound
Of hunter or of hunter's hound,

And watch, upon its margin curled,
The shadows of their water world ;
They come, her nymphs, with lilies crowned,
Each silver ankle sandal-bound,
And, when the jocund trump is blown,
They gather round their lady's throne ;
And on and on to music sweet
Their steps in merry measure beat—
The tresses fall,
The glances meet :—
She is the fairest of them all :
Daughter of the mighty Sun
Revelling on when day is done.

THE ROSE AND THE NIGHTINGALE.

I.

THE Rose and the Nightingale, long, long ago,
Loved one another, as the green leaves know
What time the stars shone clearly.
Rich and wild was the nightingale's strain—
And the rose, she blushed with pleasure and with pain,
To think she was loved so dearly.
And so all the night they took their delight
In a garden by a river in the soft dewlight

Of the silvery summer weather ;
And the moon nothing loath saw them nightly both
Singing and blushing together.
This is the tale, as the green leaves know,
Of the rose and the nightingale, long, long ago.

II.

The song the nightingale sang in that hour
Into the ears of the trembling flower,
Came not of earth nor with earth abode ;
Far in the west it seemed to rise
Over the cloud gates in the skies,
On which so late the sunset glowed.
Some spirit song, so sweet and long,
Now far and faint, now loud and strong,

Under the silver moon it flowed :
Then to the sunset died again,
Or seemed to die ; for, far from men,
Stretched on his couch of gleaming heather,
The shepherd on Arcadia's heights
Who hears the god-like hymn at nights,
Which the immortals hymn together,
Knows that the strain doth never die,
But through the earth, and seas, and sky,
Peals on for ever and for aye.

III.

O tender lover ! O delicate maiden,
Meeting together this balmy night,
Where the flowers with perfume and incense laden

Breathless with passion and pale for delight
Bathe in the flood of the full moonlight ;
Love one another, while yet ye may,
And listen, oh listen this night, I pray,
To the song the nightingale singeth ;
For he singeth a many to river and tree,
But only one to his rose sings he,
And the rose she glows at but one note she knows,
Though many a song, as the bright river goes,
On its bosom out-rings ^{s on} ~~it~~, its border outflows ;
And he who listens for this sweet song,
Hears it but once in his whole life long ;
For the sun grows fierce as the months go by,
And the nightingale sings not to hot July.
Youth with her soft smile wanders away,

And hearts are harder when hairs are gray.
Love one another while yet ye may.
And learn and gather this song that is sung
All night by the river for ever and ever
The listening leaves and the roses among.
That ere your spirit with years decay,
And the joy and the music within you die,
Ye may sing it for once to the earth and the sky ;
And when ye are asked, in the years far away,
Whence ye have learned it, the strange sweet lay,—
Answer,—we learned it, as green leaves know,
From the rose and the nightingale, long, long ago.

OMNES EODEM.

INTO the far land
Of twilight and silence,
A sad caravan,
We march to the river
Of Lethe, where never
Breaks sunbeam, nor ever
Comes music of man.

And one as he goes binds his brow with the laurel,
And one plucks a chaplet of cypress and sorrel,

To make him a garland
Of sadness the while,—
As file upon file
We pass into silence.

Under the crust
Of the paths that we travel,
Withers the dust
Of the ages before.

Lost generations have trod where we trample ;
What have they left us behind of ensample ?—

A shell in the gravel,
A bone on the shore.
'Twere joy to be banished
To asphodel meadows,

Faintly to cherish

A shadowy strife.

But the centuries perish ;

Their echoes are vanished !

The dead have no shadows,

No thin after-life !

Sigh we or smile,

Swiftly the while

We pass into silence.

Who guides our procession,

Who marshals the throng,

Fronting the darkness

With torch and with song ?

'Tis the genius who leads us, the first of the train,

His sad forehead circled with knowledge and pain.

Of the flowers that he bore us
No fruit shall remain.
Silent before us
The islands of wonder,
Dark realms of the dumb.
Behind us, the thunder
Of swift generations.
We go, O ye nations ;
Lost echoes, we come.

SONG.

GIVE me the flower, that in your bosom blowing
Makes the room sweet with scents and thoughts
of you ;

I seek no other boon or promise, knowing
Heaven is not near, for all its clouds of blue.

Blossoms as fair will bloom for you hereafter,
When this, and he who asks it, both depart ;
Nor need you miss, through hours of silver laughter,
One faded bloom and one dejected heart.

SILENUS.

THE winds and clouds were playing
In depths of blue serene,
When Love took Life a-maying
Through fairy glen and green ;
And filled her lap and bosom,
And all her blowing hair,
With purple bud and blossom,
And grasses ripe and rare.

Concealed in river rushes,
Silenus, eyes aglow,
From ferns and alder bushes,
Beheld the truants go,
Linked hand in hand together,
And hunting down the sky
Each floating summer feather,
And flashing dragon-fly.

“The Gods are great, Silenus,”
He murmured: “Not for thee
The lovely gifts of Venus,
The laughter and the glee.
As harts before the leopard,
From thee the Dryads fleet,

And leave the lonely shepherd
A gleam of flying feet."

What forest glades and alleys
They thriddled, none can say :
Down what enchanted valleys,
Or by what water way.

Who counts each cape and islet,
Round which the vessel trails,
Where Love is master-pilot,
And Fancy fills the sails ?

And still Silenus tarried,
Till the sun's chariot soon
To middle heaven had carried
The glowing afternoon.

Shadeward the lizard glided ;
The fields were faint with light ;
And, ere the day divided,
He saw another sight.

Treading no mirthsome measure,
Nor hand in hand they came ;
His eye was dead to pleasure,
Her cheek a fever-flame.
He chides her feet that linger,
And mocks her tear that flows ;
She pulls with joyless finger
The petals of a rose.

And so the twain departed,
That met at morning dew,

Life, worn and dreary-hearted,
And Love—to travels new.
And every summer blossom
They plucked at break of day
Went fluttering down the bosom
Of wind and cloud at play.

Thereat Silenus, smiling :
“ If Love and Life,” said he,
“ Thus end their soft beguiling,
No nectar joys for me.
Methinks the fates who fashion
Our pasturage and path
Make of the flowers of passion
A barren aftermath.”

And ere his mood was ended,
Down kneeling in the weed,
He took and cut and mended
A shining river reed ;
And blew thereon a measure
So piercing and so sweet,
That all the Fauns for pleasure
Came trooping to his feet.

He sang of summers wasted
In wooing idle wind ;
How Love's ambrosia tasted
Leaves bitterness behind ;
And how the woods are lonely,
And how the Gods are wise,

And gave Silenus only

The secrets of the skies.

Far off till shadows darken,

And twilight holds the plain,

The shepherds stand and harken

To the enchanted strain.

There sits Silenus playing,

That all who hear may know

How Life and Love from maying

Return not as they go.

THE CLASSICS.

DRAW nigh with joy, for this is holy ground.

Here keep the vocal Nine their mountain feasts ;

Here comes Apollo, aweary of his priests,

To fountains ever fresh and sweet with sound.

Here every peak and precipice around

With music breaks the morn. In youth we knew

The choir, when all their uplifted clarions blew

About us, and each thought came laurel-crowned.

And still each pulse of grief, joy, memory rolls,

Set to immortal words. O master souls,

Ye do the hearts ye charm some little wrong ;
For who can sing when Homer is so sweet ;
Sigh, as Catullus sighed at Lesbia's feet ;
Or chaunt, for sound of Dante's trumpet-song ?

VIA APPIA.

MOONLIGHT upon the granite Appian way !

The ghostly tombs of dead men glorious,

Monuments, columns, shrines, illumined thus,

Appear a silver city of all decay.

“ Rome’s works remain, her heroes pass away ;”

Mnemosyne replied, “ Freedom and law—

The future’s self is born of Roman clay.”

But even as so she spake, behold, I saw

A farther future still—man’s feeble birth,

Whelmed ’mid the drifts of time, the ages’ dross ;

And, after many a cycle, perfect earth
Move to pre-ordered ruin ; and, in her place,
Fed with the shock, and brighter by the loss,
Infinite worlds, immeasurable space.

EXILE.

THIS day the world that wrought him cruel woe
Comes to shed tears and flowers upon his grave
Too late. My God ! is there no after wave
Of joy for patriots and for saints, who sow
That men unborn may reap ? May they not know
How nations march to death with flaming eyes,
Chaunting their names ; nor learn, with proud surprise,
Their work is done : their worth confessed below :
Their praise immortal ? Hush ! In God they rest !
No human voices move them : they are still :

Nor needs their bliss an earthly complement,
Filled full of Him whose peace in spirits blest
Calms each heroic pulse, each fervent will,
And feeds the exile's heart with deep content.

THE SERVICE OF THE GODS.

THE Gods accept thy service for the strife—
Yet—ere thou take this baptism of the fire—
Bethink thee they are stern, and measure life,
Not by unfinished dream or high desire—
All that may be or all that might have been,
But by the great thing done or left undone.
As we accomplish on this earthly scene
So shall our quittance be. And now the sun
Breaks from his mountain throne upon the day.

His beams will be a burning fire to parch
Thy fainting feet upon the noonday march ;
Shadeless and waterless must be thy way.
Yet, if thy purpose hold for high emprise,
Go forth and prosper, soldier of the skies.

LIFE and new life—Give me the cup once more.
No need to crown for me its rim in flowers—
These would but bring again the scent of hours
Too sweet to scorn, too fleeting to deplore.
Youth's triumphs : revel : joys in golden store :
Rich love itself has brought me poor content,
For the grey thought that, ere the wine be spent,
Night comes apace to close the festal door.
Let boys wreath fate with lilies : I, aflame
To do what yet I know not, strive a strife,

Smite once in thunder at all the doors of fame,
And make dull worlds re-echo, ask but life,
To slake this thirst, and be what men have been,
Ere I go hence and am no longer seen.

“RETURN,” I cried, “dark grows the way and dread ;
Upon the moor the mountain winds are cold ;
Come back to paths of morning bloom instead,
Our chestnut glades, all fire with green and gold,
Where the fair sunshine seemed not ever old.
More flowers are yet to pluck in that sweet land :
I have left songs half sung, fancies half planned,
Lilies ungathered, tales of love untold,
The brows I love the best ungarlanded.”

But the sad guide who holds us by the hand,

Whose swift and soundless feet no turning know,
Pointed still onward. "Whither so?" I said.
Then in his eyes the stern reply I read,
"Whither the summer leaves and grasses go."

THE BUTTERFLIES.

THE butterflies, their colour snow,

Flight upon flight to seaward go.

Ah, fair white butterflies, with you

That I might range yon airy blue !

Tell me, my queen, beloved and bright,

My gipsy, with the eyes of light,

Had I but wings as blithe as they,

Where would I take my shining way ?

I'd stay to kiss no rose that blooms—
O'er sunny plains and forest glooms,
Straight to thy lovely lips I'd fly,
Flower of my soul, thereon to die.

(*From* THÉOPHILE GAUTIER.)

ADIEU.

“ADIEU, my love,” I cried, “adieu.”

She rose, and from her bobbin drew

One slender thread of silken blue,

Then deftly circling round me

About my heart the knot she threw,

And to her girdle bound me.

“And when,” she said, “this charm shall break,

A hair, a single hair, I’ll take

Of those you flattered, for my sake,

~~Once~~ ^{first} When you were my wooer,

And see, if my poor tresses make

A stronger bond, and truer."

My princess, brighter than the dew !

And if all silken chains undo ;

If sweet slight hair should part in two,

Or from your girdle sever ;

One tear in those soft eyes of blue

Will hold me here for ever.

I LOVE a flower, but which flower of the many,

There lies my grief.

Vainly I search the rose gardens for any

Heart hid in mid leaf.

Soft blow the roses at twilight ; divine is

The nightingale's air.

" I seek for a fair heart as tender as mine is,

As tender and fair."

The nightingale's song o'er the thicket is shaken,

I know the sweet tone,

And the burden :—" We both are so sad and forsaken,

So sad, so alone."

(From HEINE.)

EX ACADEMIA.

I BRING from the gardens of Isis

These blossoms yet bright with the dew,
Though fed on a myriad of spices,

Their leaves are but feeble and few.
Ere the bloom from the year has departed,
And sunlight declines on the tree,
Thou shalt know, O beloved and true-hearted,
One flower has been wholly for thee.

Then take it, and bind it about thee,

A coronal plucked for thy brow :

Its grace were but little without thee,

Itself but a perishing bough.

If, touched by thine hand, it discloses

Some beauty unborn, it will be,

That deep in each cluster of roses

A sigh is embedded for thee.

EVERY light Faun from every olive grove
Gathered to listen ; all the birds forbore ;
While Silvia sweet administered to Love
A holy oath that he would love no more.
By earth, by heaven, by the deep seas he swore—
And now he walks, a tender penitent,
Down each moon-lighted glade, each myrtle shore,
Keeping his eyes and thoughts most truly bent
On solemn things and Silvia. As he went,

“Whence now, fair Love?” I cried, “and whither
away?”

He with hushed lip and air of gay content—

“Friendship am I, dear gossip : yesterday
My name was Love : to-morrow it will be
What it shall please our Silvia to decree.”

THE WEATHERCOCK.

BRIGHT feet are twinkling far and near,

Bright eyes with dewlight glisten ;

What whispers youth in beauty's ear

While beauty turns to listen ?

Of thee, my first, our fathers told,

Yet never told too often,

A theme to make the timid bold,

And frozen lips to soften.

The sunlight breaks on lawn and lea,

Fresh morning airs are blowing ;

From sleep the farmer shakes him free,

For chanticleer is crowing.

Come sun, come rain upon the pane,

Lightly they both are reckoned

By him who little heeds my first,

True to thy call, my second.

And who can tell thy course, my whole,

What flight thy fancy pleases ?

Who knows the wild clouds whence they roll,

Or whither haste the breezes ?

I lightly fly, I soar on high,

O'er town, and tower, and steeple ;

And read the secrets of the sky

To princes and their people.

ABELARD TO ELOISA.

EARTH wails, as the wild winds unrobe her ;
In saddened apparel and sober,
The dearest of days in October
Draws stormily near.

One song—ere this harp is unbended,
One leaf—while the bough is unrended,
Receive, before autumn be ended,
The last of its year.

For the rest of my months must be boonless.

Comes Snow-time—with nights that are moonless—

The hour when all singers are tuneless,

And birds are all mute.

Soon life's little page will be written,

The fruit from the ^{branches be}~~tree be down~~ smitten,

And frosts of midwinter have bitten

The ^{tree}~~branch~~ and the root.

And what shall the song be I sing thee?

'Tis still an old music I string thee,

New wrought into cadence, to bring thee

Anew to thy feet.

I have but the one note of greeting,

Sad song, over worn with repeating,

Its burden, that life is so fleeting,

That love is so sweet.

Through mists of old memories declining,

Dead joys and forgotten repining,

I see thy sweet face ever shining,

And bright through the years.

Serene, as the light in its sources,

Unmarred by the hours or their forces,

And true, as the tides in their courses

Are true to the spheres.

O faith, unprofaned and undying,

O Love, the world's changes defying,

Fair face, for the years that are flying,

Still fairer to me.

Be nigh me, as winter is nearer,
As leaves become sadder and serer,
And winds utter louder and clearer
The doom of the tree.

TO CYNTHIA.

CYNTHIA, go ; the fates have granted

All thy glowing fancy wills :

Eden vales, and lands enchanted,

Lie beyond the summer hills.

Enter where thine hopes have fluttered,

Many a dreamy night and day ;

Let the magic word be uttered

That unlocks the far away.

Be and seem the queen of beauty,
Sweeping with a grand disdain
Past the knights, whose single duty
Is to love, and love in vain.

Touch the hearts, and guide the dances,
Fairest of the gracious throng,
And redress with noble glances
All the vast of human wrong.

Then when every ill is righted,
Tyrants quelled, and rivals slain,
When the world, an orb benighted,
Is refreshed with light again :

Find the fairy Prince who yonder
Tarries for thine eyes of blue :
Take his hand, and with him wander
Down the isles of purple hue.

Learn the song that through the ages
Rings in one unaltered chime,
Faintly writ in poets' pages,
Or musicians' golden rhyme.

Soon to grander secrets turning,
Delve through all the lore of years,
Take and make thine own the learning
Treasured for the sage's ears.

Read of cycles dimly lighted,
Ending in the solar plan :
Wasted types of life requited
By the final growth of man.

Learn the tale of wilder nations—
Light and shadow, strife and storm—
Through lucescent generations
Brightening into social form.

Last to mellow age subsiding,
Floating down the farther stream,
Come again, and bring us tiding
Whether life be like the dream.

Ah ! the birds at morn upwinging,
Travel-stained return from flight :
And the hearts that left us singing
Come in silence home at night.

SONG.

NYMPHS and shepherds, tell me where

Celia sweet her heart has hidden.

Bright her eyes beyond compare,

Tender cheeks that glow unbidden ;

Underneath some flower or tree

Must a heart as tender be.

Riding down your glades of green,

Sighs and smiles I find together ;

By-and-bye a kiss unseen,

Here a glove, and there a feather.

Tangled in some thicket fast,

I shall find a heart at last.

From the sweetness of its scent,

I can guess what rose has seen her ;

Birds sing merrier where she went,

Where she stept the grass is greener.

Somewhere 'neath your proudest tree

Sure her hidden heart will be.

Shadows fall—the lights decline.

On I ride in vain endeavour.

Can it be, O masters mine,

Celia had no heart whatever ?

By her holy eyes of blue,

Here or there it lies perdu !

“ Chi sa se mai
Ti sovverrai di me.”

METASTASIO.

THE last sad tie is broken—
The last adieu is spoken ;
Rise winds and speed the vessel
That floats my love to sea.
Fair years of richer pleasure
Remain for you to measure ;
But ah ! who knows, Sibylla,
If you will think of me ?

Here every flower that blossoms
Is full of memories tender :
In every sunset splendour
Your face again I see.
There's not a star that glistens
But for your footfall listens ;
And you—who knows, Sibylla,
If you will think of me ?

The dove you fed at morning
Still haunts the spot you taught her ;
At night translucent water
Sprays up by torch and tree.
Still by the brink I wander,
Upon old words to ponder,

And marvel if Sibylla
Remembers them and me.

Here gleams the chestnut cover,
Where first she scorned her lover,
Then made sweet peace, and granted
Her hand in his to be.

Here lived we, hope our diet,
There, wrapped in love and quiet,
We—ah ! who knows, Sibylla,
If you will think of me ?

For many an eye will woo you,
And many a bright new comer
Will swear on eves of summer
Your vassal true to be.

Amid the thousand lovers
That every sun discovers,
Who knows, who knows, Sibylla,
If you will think of me ?

Yet when above thy garden
Some silver moon arises,
And song of love surprises
Thy balcony and thee.
Think of the nights I pleaded
Beneath thy porch unheeded ;
Think—ah ! who knows, Sibylla,
If thou wilt think of me ?

GOOD-NIGHT. GOOD-MORNING.

THE sun a shining orb descends

Behind the mountain wold ;

Gloom gathers fast, the daylight ends :

Sheep journey to the fold.

Peace and farewell, ye torrent rills—

Good-night to earth and sky.

So homeward from the silent hills

We went, my love and I.

Come, sweet night. Day, take thy flight :

My Love will make the darkness light.

Rest to the earth—the weary earth—

Sweet rest ; till far away

Upon the hills we saw the birth

And triumph of the day.

Again the mighty sun arose,

And on each mountain lawn

Began the million golden glows

That usher in the dawn.

Go, dear night. Come, purple light ;

Rise, Love, and make the morning bright.

At morn I found these violets blue

Where early morning lies,

And brought them fresh with light and dew—

Not purer than her eyes—

To her who was my morning flower,

And is my flower at noon.

Soon comes a duskier twilight hour,

And night will follow soon.

Sweet face, stay ; life ebbs away ;

Be thou thy lover's evening ray.

POSCIMUR.

FOAM up again ! The night is young,

Our song of songs is still unsung.

Bar the great doors. Let none depart

Untold the mistress of his heart.

Shall Love, the god, untoasted go

For all his blessings ? No, no, no !

What ! silent all ? Then mine it be

This merry night to guide the glee.

Fill round, and, while the glasses meet,
Here's to the sweetest of the sweet.
When friends are met, and goblets flow,
Is Love a secret? No, no, no!

“Where dwells my love?” A country bright,
A summer land of love and light.
Pure as her eyes the heaven above—
But is it light or is it love
Lends yonder land its purple glow?
I will not wager. No, no, no!

“And loves she?”—’Neath a chestnut tree
Sweet evening brought my love to me.
I spake of love as lovers speak;
No star revealed her maiden cheek

As she made answer, bending low ;

Can words be sweeter ? No, no, no !

“ Her name, her name ? ” So smooth it glides,

Love’s whisper in the sound abides.

Think of the name beyond the rest,

Sunniest and loveliest and best,

And breathe it soft as zephyrs blow.

But shall I tell it ? No, no, no !

ENDYMION.

LOVE, let me go ! the summer night is ending ;
Far off my silver-footed steeds are wending,
Unpiloted and reinless, down the lawn.
In yonder skies Aurora's armies quicken,
And the night's planets, pale and splendour stricken,
Dissolve into the twilight of the dawn.

Go, shining one ! divinest, fairest, dearest,
Though dark thy shepherd's night, till thou appearest,

Resume thy glorious reins, retake thy car ;
Guide thy bright team to heaven's illumined portal,
Where, sentinels of night, the Hours immortal
Await their fiery coming from afar.

There with thy splendid smile descend and enter,
Be throned amid the Gods, and in their centre,
Seem the cold Dian they are wont to see.
But when at night begin the Oread revels,
Come o'er deep glades and lighted mountain levels,
Knowing Endymion waits for love and thee.

SCOPULIS SURDIOR ICARIS.

THERE stands the rock in mid-ocean,

Here at its feet throbs the main ;

Never a word to the water's devotion

Doth the rock answer again.

But the great sea gathers all his waves to it,

And with a low cry of pain

Spills out his life at the rock's feet to woo it,

Knowing he wins but disdain.

THERE stands the queen in her splendour,

Here are the hearts that would fain

Spend their best blood at her footstool to bend her,

Never a glance doth she deign.

But the wild hearts, yearning still to adore her,

Though they adore but in vain,

Creep to her throne, pour their treasure before her,

Give, and ask nothing again.

MEMNON.

ON Memnon's statue dark as night

When early morning brake,

Touched by the lovely orient light,

The stone in answer spake.

A chord resounded, notes arose,

Responsive to the morning glows.

My God, and shall this heart of stone

No answer make for me,

When thy dear light upon it thrown

Has wakened it to thee ?

No voice arise within to praise

The Giver of the heavenly rays.

Deep was the night and dark the sky

Before thy morn was shown.

Each star that seemed to shine on high,

But made the darkness known.

I saw thee not, but yet could see

That all was dark apart from thee.

Lord of the darkness, unto whom

The night is as the day :

Within thine arms, amid the gloom,

Safe, even then, I lay.

Unweening of the will divine,

Which ere I asked had made me thine.

The morning came in crimson fire,

And spread from pole to pole.

I saw and knew the love entire,

That long had kept my soul.

No tear, in darkness wept by me,

Had perished unperceived of thee.

And now that light and life from heaven

Upon this bosom shine,

Shall morn alone to thee be given,

The rest of day be mine ?

No—every hour of life shall be

For ever dedicate to thee.

MANQUÉ.

I COULD have sung, had life been clear
From thoughts too sad for mortal ear,
And visions full of human wrong.
But doubt and tumult in the brain
Confused the dream, and spoiled the strain :
And now—the wild winds sing my song.

I could have loved, had love's repast
Been as the mortal passion vast,

Or matched the longing of the soul.
But larger love than earth can know
Would leave our deepest fires aglow—
Now—o'er my heart the waters roll.

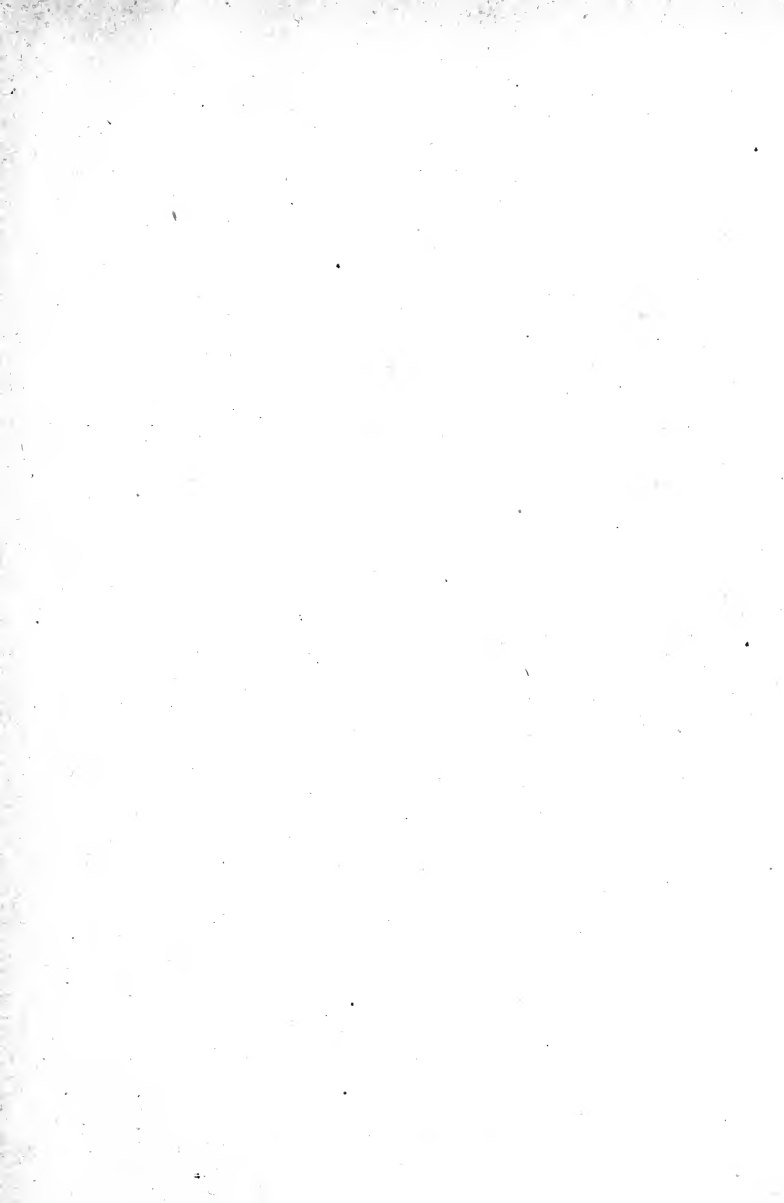
I could have wept, had any tears
Been as enduring as the years
That make and mar our mortal span.
But hearts grow cold as seasons fly,
Life leaves us but the power to sigh,
And takes the strength to weep from man.

I could have striven, had trumpets blown,
Had but some battle banner shown,

Some feat been named, to do or die.
But the ignoble grooves of life
Were all remote from hero strife,
And down we drifted—Time and I.

O winds, eternal mountain choir,
More passionate than mortal lyre !
O waves, more loud than trumpet-tongue !
Ye chant the wild regrets of man ;
His fever since the world began—
Ye know the songs my heart had sung.

THE END.



NCI 12025

